IRAQ Cultural Awareness

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13th SC(E) G5

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AGENDA

- IRAQ ORIENTATION
- IRAQ-VUCA ENVIRONMENT
- DO'S AND DON'TS
- DRESS/RELIGION
- REVENGE AND HATE
- NEGOCIATIONS
- INTERPRETERS

Expedia
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Eşfahān
Banghāzī
Haifa
As Suwaydā'
Baghdād
IRAN
IRAQ
Dezfūl
Jerusalem
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Ahvāz
An Najaf
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FĀRS
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Al Fayyūm
AN NAFŪD
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EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
Asyūṭ
Manama
Sūhāj
D E S E R T
Red Sea
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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC marcopolo

EXPEDITIONS

IRAQ IS A “VUCA” ENVIRONMENT

- Volatile
- Uncertain
- Complex
- Ambiguous

GREETINGS

- HELLO-ASSALAAM A’LAIKUM
- REPLY-WA A’LAIKUM ESSALAAM

DO AND DON'T'S

- SHOW RESPECT FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE
- SHAKE HAND WITH MEN TO SHOW FRIENDLINESS
- GREET/TALK TO MEN
- SHOW RESPECT AT RELIGIOUS SITES
- RESPECT RELIGIOUS LEADERS
- TREAT TRIBE LEADERS WITH DEFERENCE

DO’S AND DON’TS CONT.

- EAT FOOD IF OFFERED, EVEN IF !
- SHARE FOOD WITH LOCALS, IT GIVES YOU SECURITY
- DON’T TOUCH HOLY BOOKS
- DON’T APPEAR TOPLESS IN PUBLIC
- DON’T ENTER A MOSQUE WEARING SHOES
- DON’T STEP ON A GRAVE IN A CEMETERY

DO’S AND DON’TS

- DON’T LEAVE THE GUEST ROOM WHEN VISITING A HOUSE
- DON’T INSULT A MAN IN FRONT OF HIS WIFE AND FAMILIY
- DON’T MISUNDERSTAND SAME SEX KISSING
- DON’T OFFER OR RECEIVE FOOD/DRINKS WITH THE LEFT HAND

RELIGION

- SHIA/SUNNI

Source: The General Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

- **Muslims**
  - **Shi'is 60-65%**
  - **Sunnis 30-35%**
  - **Other 3%**
    - **Christians**
    - **Jews**
    - **Yezidis**

NORMAL

PEOPLE

(NOT GAYS)

Food Customs

- Accept any invitation.
- Pray before eating
- Eat w/right hand
- Eat as a group (family meal)
- Eat w/out criticizing the food
- Eat from your side of the common dis
- Leave serious discussions for after me
- Food Important for celebrations
- Tea and Coffee important when receiving guests
- Praise the host when you finish
- Thank the host and wife (but not directly)
- Reciprocate the invitation

NEGOCIATIONS

- WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

Do your homework

- Has it been dealt with before ?
- What is the background/ history ?
- Read previous reports on the task.
- Who are the persons involved, name, personality, authority, religion, attitudes ?
- What are your options, limitations?
- When and where will the negotiation take place (get confirmation)?
- Establish an agenda for the meeting .

Approaching the site

- **Show minimum force necessary.**
- **Don’t point guns at them.**
- **Remove your sunglasses…..smile**

Opening Talks

- **Exchange small talk.**
- **Remember local habits ….respect them.**
- **Take your time and be patient.**
- **Use some Arabic friendly words.**

Main Talks

- Let your counterparts start.
- Listen to him, do not interrupt.
- Take notes, capture issues.
- Focus on the issues not on the person.
- Start to agree on the agenda.
- Negotiate details.
- Complete negotiation by repeating what has been agreed upon.
- Arrange for the next meeting / visit.
- Don’t forget final polite phrases.

Do’s and Don’ts during negotiation

- **Don’t tell jokes – they do not translate well.**
- **Don’t have side-bar conversations.**
- **Don’t discuss politics or religion.**
- **Don’t promise anything beyond your ability to control.**
- **Don’t look at your translator – look at your counterpart.**
- **Do maintain dignity and politeness.**
- **Do give time (i.e. be patient – “negotiations take time”)**

Planning Considerations

- Security
- Cultural awareness
- Impartiality
- Affiliation

How to work with interpreter

- In critical situation make sure that the interpreter understands you.
- Don’t ask interpreter opinion except for cultural issues.
- Dress code considerations.
- Watch interpreter for self questioning.

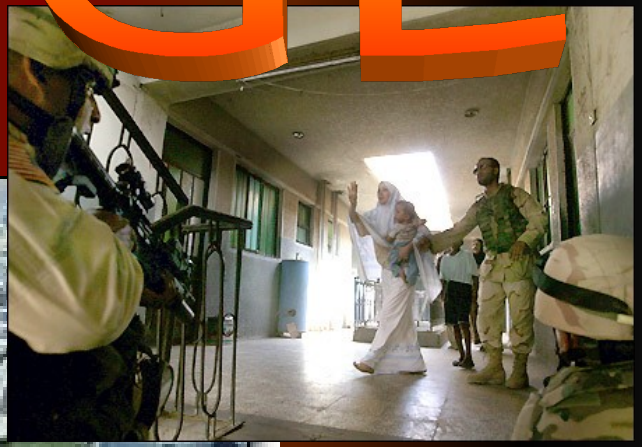
How to keep interpreter more honest

- ✓Watch interpreter for self questioning.
- ✓Using yes, no questions.
- ✓Watching voice inflection (to determine wither if something going on….).
- ✓Putting limits, interpreter isn’t to argue with people, he must say only the thing that I say.
- ✓Using two interpreters, especially during sensitive meetings (to check in balance, also they can help each other).
- ✓Using some Arabic language they will appreciate that you are speaking their own language also it could be ice breaker.
- ✓Speak 2-3 sentences and stop.
- ✓Some English words don't translate to

HONOR AND SHAME

> Family Symbol.
> Symbol of Honor.
> Face Saving.

REVENGE



Revenge is a result of ignoring culture

QUESTIONS?

Resources:

Cultural Awareness Site:

http://www.universityofmilitaryintelligence.us/cflic/cultural/default.asp